

August 12, 2015

Feel free to shop till you drop while on your U.S. vacation

Q. *Currently I have a Visitor Visa, but I am interested in combining business with my pleasure on my next visit to the United States. May I buy items for my business while on vacation in the United States?*

A. By all means – spend, spend, spend! Shop till you drop!

Many people who travel to the United States enjoy shopping for their businesses while they are on vacation. The most common form of Visitor Visa is a combination of the B-1 (visitor for business purposes) and B-2 (visitor for pleasure, tourism or visiting). This is also known as a B-1/B-2 visa. Visitors on this visa often enjoy purchasing products in the United States to assist their businesses back home. Depending on your line of work, these might include tools such as cameras, computers, telephones or musical instruments as well as products for resale back home.

Using your B-1/B-2 visa to visit friends or family while also making a shopping trip for business purposes is a legitimate use of that category of visa. Remember that employment in the United States is not permitted on a B-1/B-2 visa. If you are shopping or otherwise working for your business or employer while you are visiting the United States, you are not permitted to receive salary from the United States.

Generally, each time you enter the United States, you will be questioned by Customs and Border Patrol at the airport. You should tell the immigration official of your plans. As always, you should not stay longer than the amount of time granted by the immigration official.

You can find more information about how to travel to the U.S. on our website, www.kingston.usembassy.gov and the website of our authorized service provider at www.usvisa-info.com. Keep on top of Embassy news on our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/pages/US-Embassy-Jamaica and by following @USEmbassyJA on Twitter. We also answer general visa questions on our Facebook and Twitter pages.

Remember, your appointment time is your arrival time NOT your interview time. Do not show up earlier than your appointment time.